



# Dream of Travel Writing

## Annual Review Part 4: Getting Clear on What You'll Accomplish Next Year

This week is about getting crystal clear on what you're going to accomplish next year. So, in this webinar, we're not just gonna look forward at the year ahead as opposed to back like we've done in the past two webinars in this series, but we're actually gonna do a little bit of a time travel and take ourselves all the way forward to the end of 2018 and look back on 2018 in a slightly similar way that we had in the past couple webinars as we've looked back on how 2017 has gone for you all.

So, some of the things that we're gonna do this week is that we're actually gonna do something a little bit unconventional, at least for our webinars. I've been doing this type of thing in a lot of our workshops, including some of the live video workshops that we've been doing. But we're actually gonna do two exercises this week where I'm gonna give you something to do. And I want you guys to all take a couple of minutes right now and do it.

Often on webinars, I give you some ideas about things to do. After the call, when you get home, obviously, we talk about a lot of tips and different things for you to be working on but we don't always... In fact, we pretty much never stop in the middle of the call itself to say, "Okay, guys, you have two or three minutes, go." And have me check in with you and answer questions as you are doing the exercise. So, that's something that we're gonna be doing this week.

So, like I said, that's a new addition, that's gonna come a little bit later in the call. First, we're gonna talk about goals because this week, as we said, is we're getting crystal clear on what you're gonna accomplish next year. I very specifically didn't put goals in the title because I find the word goal, you know, like the word time peg when we're talking about pitches, is a word...time peg a phrase, not a word, but you know what I mean, is a word that's so fraught for us. You know, it has so much baggage that comes with it.

You know, there might be memories that you have of being off a situation where you had goals that were enforceable to the point that you would get fired if you didn't meet them exactly, and, you know, if there's a misunderstanding with your boss and they think the goal is one thing and you think the goal is something else, then, you know, you're out of luck. So, there's a lot of words, there's a lot of feelings that people are gonna have around goals in "The Unbearable Lightness of Being," which is a really lovely book and I'll type it in the chatbox because people always ask. The book that I just mentioned is "The Unbearable Lightness of Being."

We about the idea of motifs that everybody has different meanings and resonances for themselves and their own vocabulary of whatever word means. So, like I said, that's one of



# Dream of Travel Writing

## Annual Review Part 4: Getting Clear on What You'll Accomplish Next Year

the reasons why I don't wanna use the word goals this week so much to talk about what we're gonna be doing in terms of our planning for the year ahead. But we're gonna use some other, you know, less fraught, more approachable, and more productive, I hope, diagnostics for that.

And so, one of those is gonna be...well, actually, there's gonna be the two exercises that we're doing. And then, I'm gonna give you some tips about how to work through that for next week.

So, let's get into it. So today, we're talking about what we're gonna do for the year ahead, but like I said, we're not gonna talk so much about goals. I believe it was Kerry, somebody said a four-letter word, right, or Adrian said a four-letter word. And that's the thing, right? Like, goals have a lot of history for a lot of us. But there's also some very specific reasons why they tend not to work.

But one thing that you might be thinking is that when I talked a lot about why people fail to do what they set out to do why they don't reach a certain amount of success, one of the things that I said was that they don't have sales goals. So here I am talking about how goals are horrible and we hate them, but I also said that to move your freelance business forward, you need to have sales goals. How are those things compatible?

So, I like to think of things like sending out a certain number of pitches or needing to earn a certain amount of income every month. You might wanna think of those as targets, right? There's something that you're aiming at, and you will get as close to that as you can. It's the metric that's important for you to focus your efforts and for you to measure how well you have done against that target or that goal or that metric or what have you, but they're not the same thing as these kind of mythical goals that people set for the year.

So, in past webinars, I had mentioned Chris Guillebeau who quite famously does this very, very long and involved annual review online every day or every year. And someone had put up the link to his spreadsheet that he has. And I said, "Well, I don't know if that's really something that we wanna get into here." And I wanna explain a little bit more about that because some of the annual reprocesses that you might see people do are very much around goals, that's around listing out 3, 5, 12 different things that you will accomplish during the year, and kind of, you know, carrying this list around or checking in with it.



# Dream of Travel Writing

## Annual Review Part 4: Getting Clear on What You'll Accomplish Next Year

And I feel like there's like I said, a use for things of that [inaudible] as a target that you wanna aim for. But having too many targets that you're trying to keep track of over too long a period of time, it's not even just that it doesn't make sense from the perspective of remembering all those things or trying to do all those things but it just gets difficult if they're not very clearly altogether grounded and related in what's going on with you.

So, one of the ways that a lot of people talk about setting these goals or "targets" that you're gonna reach whether it's for the year ahead or just for the month is this concept of SMART goals. So, I wanted to mention this and a couple other types of goal setting frameworks that people use. And while we're not gonna talk about them today and what issues there are with them to help you kind of get the framework of what we're gonna use today and why it's a bit more fluid.

So, SMART goals, if you haven't heard of them before, SMART refers to specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, some people also say realistic but I think that's the same as achievable, and then time-based. So, for instance, this might take the form of I want to send 15 pitches this month to national magazines. So, that would be specific because we're talking about what types of magazines we wanna send. It could be made more specific by saying we're gonna send 15 front of book pitches. It's measurable because we've put 15 on it.

It's achievable because, you know, even if you're super, super new to pitching, you could get to them at 15 pitches over the course of a month, right? A month would be around 176 work hours and 15 pitches into that is going to be something like, you know, even if you were to just do that all month and you'd have six to seven hours on each pitch you could get it done. So, 15 pitches in a month is definitely something that any of us could do.

And it's relevant, right, because we all wanna be published in national magazines. And it's time-based because I said we're gonna do this in one month. So that's the kind of goal that could totally check all of those boxes. And then I often see people set out for themselves, and I just wanted to check in. I see a couple... I see the numbers of folks on the call growing a little bit. If you're just joining us, let us know in the chat box which of the past webinars you've caught so I have a sense of where you are in terms of what we've covered previously in this series. Thanks.

So, as I'm talking about SMART goals, people often set these things out for themselves, and that can be something as, you know, real and important as, "I wanna earn \$5,000 this month." But here's the thing is that goals like that even if they seem specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-based, they often don't come to pass for a lot of reasons.



# Dream of Travel Writing

## Annual Review Part 4: Getting Clear on What You'll Accomplish Next Year

And so, some of those reasons are that even though you set out this goal that does seem relevant like it's important to your business to pitch to national magazines, you don't really know how you personally can achieve something that you haven't done before. You also don't really know how that is gonna affect your business if you do try to get out these 15 pitches or whatever it is.

So, I said it's achievable because, right, you could take six or seven hours but that's not necessarily also factoring in but what if you don't hear back and then you get disillusioned and you don't wanna send any more? Or what if you don't really know that many magazines and you don't know how to find additional ones? Or what if you start looking at what they're doing in the front of book of these magazines and it's really all written in-house. Are you gonna start pitching 15 features? That's not so doable in a month.

In order for a goal to actually check all these boxes, there's a lot of pre-research that you would have to do to make this happen. Now, those of you who've joined us on the past calls know that we have done a lot of digging about what we personally all have done in the past year of our freelance business that would make some of this stuff possible, but here's the thing, this goes back to where it says relevant on here.

This is a really circular thing. When I was reading more about how these SMART goals worked I found it so silly. Like, they say they need to be relevant to your business and to your business goals, but the whole point is that these are the goals, and so it's just a self-enforcing thing. So there's not a part of this type of goal setting where you actually check if this makes sense for you.

So, I've seen with people that I coach that it's very easy to get pulled into, "Okay, I need to send out letters of introduction this month, so I'm gonna spend the next two weeks reading every single article in all of these magazines that I'm interested in pitching and jotting down, you know, patterns in what they've covered and how often the editors contribute and articles by those editors that I wanna mention in my letter of introduction." But the thing is that for your letter of introduction to go out, you need a very basic level of information and doing all of that additional stuff doesn't actually help you if they simply aren't working with new freelance writers right now.

If the editor is, you know, about to get let go because the magazine was going under, there's all sorts of reasons why your email will be a bomb or a failure that are out of your control. And so, doing all that research for that percentage of magazines that are automatically not gonna respond to you is a huge waste of time. So, even though it can seem like it's moving



# Dream of Travel Writing

## Annual Review Part 4: Getting Clear on What You'll Accomplish Next Year

the needle on what you're doing and it's contributing, it's not. And so, this is one of these things with this relevancy issue.

The thing, like I said, with his relevancy thing is how do you know that it actually makes sense for you. Right? And that's something that these exercises that we're gonna go through in a little bit are gonna really, really help you pin down.

But there's another issue here with setting these goals, these SMART goals, right? And I talked a lot about achievable, and I specifically, in the example that I gave you, said I wanna send out 15 pitches. But the goals that people are more likely to set are things like, "I wanna get five articles published in national magazines or in any magazine by such and such." Like, "By March, I wanna have five articles published."

Now, how do you know if it's achievable, right? That it could be an issue. And that is what often leads people to instead of sending their pitches to markets that are gonna pay them well, that are gonna give them good clips, to pitch to places that they know will accept their article, because they wanna make sure that that goal makes sense. But that's not something that's gonna move your business forward.

So, what people often say when you're setting goals, instead of sending something like this, which is accomplishment-oriented as in, "I wanna have five articles published," "I wanna earn \$5000." They say don't set a goal around what you will achieve, set a goal around what you will work on that will go towards that end. An example of that would be those 15 pitches that I gave you, right? But the problem with that that I often find is that they feel empty if you just set yourself a production goal. And I've seen this happen with so many people. You know, like, if I say, "Great, you already have a list of 50 places to send this content marketing pitch."

You have a content marketing pitch. All you need to do is cut and paste the email addresses and the names of the company into your pitch and hit send 50 times. People don't do it. Isn't that weird? Like, they have the work already done but they just don't hit send. And part of that is that production goals that aren't attached results just aren't very motivating, right? If you just know, "Oh, I need to send 15 pitches, and who knows if I'll hear back from any of them. But I just need to send them the pitches, that's the only thing that matters." It's not even that it's demoralizing but it's just hard to kind of wrap your, "I'm gonna jump out of bed and get this thing done," around, right?



# Dream of Travel Writing

## Annual Review Part 4: Getting Clear on What You'll Accomplish Next Year

So, the issue, particularly for freelancers, but all around is that the method of goal setting is related to motivation. Okay, so the method needs to come out of that. It needs to come out of what is gonna actually cause you to get this stuff done. If you just say, "I need to earn more money this year." To myself, even if you don't vocalize that as a goal but you just know it yourself, and who hasn't set that goal for themselves? "Next year, I just need to earn more money."

You know, it's not smart, it's just a vague but it's the reality of the matter. "I just need to earn more money." That is a type of goal that a lot of people set and it's very clearly motivation-based, right? You have expenses or you have desired expenses, things you'd like to spend money on that you aren't able to do right now, and you wanna have more income so that you can cover that. For those of us who work at home or who would like to work at home, I've talked about this a lot in the past, that people who go into travel writing are all alike in certain ways.

You know, they all wanna explore, they all wanna share things from around the world with other people, but there tend to be, past all of those common characteristics, three big drivers. And I've done this exercise in a few webinars in the past and it's in my book, so some of you have probably seen it, but I'm just gonna give an explanation of what each of these are for those of you who aren't familiar.

So, these big drivers that I found over the course of about 18 months of research of talking to people to put together the book "The Six-Figure Travel Writing Road Map." These three categories jumped out to me as just a resounding grouping of people who are pursuing travel but also resounding clear groupings of paths that people were pursuing. And by and large, when people are on a path that doesn't line up to their travel writing motivation is where I see people struggle.

When you feel like you should be starting a blog because that's what everyone tells you to do, but all you wanna do is freelance write. And then you start a blog and you learn how to do it and you spend all this time figuring out WordPress and plugins, and so on and so forth, only then do you realize you have to deal with social media and you have to get people to come to your blog, and you have to network in all these Facebook groups, and none of that is what you wanted. You wanted to get away from your desk and out in the world and find stories.

So, these three motivations boil down to freedom as those people who want to be location-dependent. They wanna be anywhere, they wanna be traveling, they want that to be the basis



# Dream of Travel Writing

## Annual Review Part 4: Getting Clear on What You'll Accomplish Next Year

of their work. And they don't actually really care how their money comes in, but they've decided that the way that they're gonna fund their trips that makes the most sense for them, and these people tend to value efficiency is gonna be through travel writing.

Now the next one is people who often have a journalism background or some other kind of writing background or were big readers when they were growing up, people who really want to be published in big outlets, they don't just want to be writing travel guides, they don't just wanna have a paycheck coming in and have it be coming in from travel writing, but they want to be writing for big magazines, they wanna write a travel guide for "Bon Appétit," they wanna write blog posts for town and country, they don't just wanna be writing hotel guides for Arevendo [SP], okay?

But then, there's the other category of people who like those who value freedom, just wanna be traveling all the time but they don't particularly have to be in a certain place or, you know, to them, they're just interested in traveling and seeing what's out there. And so, they're really happy to have other people plan those trips for them and also to pay for those trips for them. So these are the people who value free trips. And so, they have decided to go into travel writing as a way to get people to send them on free trips.

So, if you haven't already figured out which one of these three motivations applies to you, make sure you do because separate from the other exercises that we're gonna do later, this is really something that you should make sure lines up with what you set out to do in 2018 or you're gonna run into problems where you have an actual internal friction between what you want to do and what you're trying to do, which is gonna result in it simply not getting done.

Now, notice in a lot of these slides I've said to make sure that this is reflected in your words. So, when I say your words, I don't mean your family words, like Game of Thrones, "Winter is coming" or "Lannister's shit gold." Isn't their actual words. Oh, "Lannisters always pay their debts," or whatever it is, right? So, pardon my language. But we're gonna get into what your words are for the year because rather than having these SMART goals or these production-based goals, having these words that line up with your motivation is what's gonna really help you make the right decisions about what to pursue in the year ahead.

So, let's start looking at that. So, how many of you have tried to set, intentionally or not, some sort of goals for the year ahead in the past? And I don't mean for you travel writing, I mean for anything. And this might be, "Hey, this is the year that we're actually gonna eat healthily." How many of us haven't set that goal, right? Or like I said, that very common tacit



# Dream of Travel Writing

## Annual Review Part 4: Getting Clear on What You'll Accomplish Next Year

goal of “I need to earn more money next year,” or, “I want to earn more money next year,” or “I want to leave my job next year.”

There's all sorts of goals that could be unintentionally set but that you do with yourself. So let me know in the chatbox if you have set goals like that for yourself in the past. And then as you do that, also let me know if you have tried to set some goals like that for your business, for your freelance travel writing for 2017. So, I'll give you guys a sec to do that.

Great. Thank you, guys, so much for sharing. And I really...and I appreciate Kerry sharing that, you know, she had health issues or I don't know if it's her or just someone else in her family that ruin that goal. This is something I see really commonly that people have certain goals for themselves, and then things like health issues specially or recently, you know, natural disasters get in the way in a manner that not only could you not foresee, sometimes with health issues you can but if it's a car accident you can't.

That sometimes you could foresee, but more often then not you can't and you just need to adjust. But the problem is it can be really hard if you started out with some goals and now you feel badly that you can't achieve them. So this is one of the reasons that we're gonna work with words instead of goals, and I'm gonna get into that in a little bit. Great.

So, one of the reasons that you may have had goals especially these really common ones that people set, like, lose weight, eat better, go to the gym, earn more money, you know, spend more time with your family. All of these goals are things that sound very high-minded. There's some very clear reasons or leave your job to become travel writing, send more pitches. There's some very clear reasons why these goals don't end up happening. And they come down to the psychology of motivation.

So, psychologists believe that motivation has three core directions. Okay? So, one of them is optimized well-being. So that, we can think of as optimizing both your present and your future. One is minimizing physical pain. So that's probably something that has happened to you in the past, especially the near past, and it's still affecting you in the present. And the other is maximizing pleasure. And that's pretty much present tense but also, it goes a little tiny bit in the future.

But you'll notice that none of these is really around, none of the automatic drivers that are wired into our DNA, our brain waves, or whatever you wanna, you know, use as the basis





# Dream of Travel Writing

## Annual Review Part 4: Getting Clear on What You'll Accomplish Next Year

there is around the future. We are not automatically wired to make our lives better for 12 months from now or 6 months from now or even 3 months from now.

So, particularly around eating sugar, this is a really big national thing in the U.S. now. It's kind of a crisis around eating sugar or sugar production causing obesity...or sugar consumption causing obesity. But we are actually wired to eat the highest caloric food that we can get our hands on. That's our wiring. And so, people talk a lot about how, you know, in grocery stores junk food is made cheaper than produce. But the thing is that we are wired to look for the highest caloric thing that we can get our hands on.

And so if it's cheaper, especially that's easier. But what that means in the short term, for your travel writing goals, is that anything that feels difficult, anything that makes you not have a good sense of well-being as in you have self-doubt about something that you're doing or you feel like you just don't know how to do something rather than you've already done it wrong, or that makes you feel like actual discomfort and particularly things that you're not happy to do are gonna be hard for you to do to move your goals forward.

So, what that means is that we need to start looking at what is right around us that is gonna be distracting us in terms of we don't feel happy about sending pitches because it takes us too long or we don't feel happy about sending pitches because we just really don't feel like we know what we're doing or because we haven't heard from editors in the past and we feel badly about it.

Any of those things that are, again, remember those three drivers, causing us to not have optimal well-being or causing us pain or not making us pleased, any of those things that are circulating around what you're trying to do with your travel writing are gonna make it very difficult for you on a pure basic psychological level to achieve what you wanna achieve.

So, how many of you guys are familiar with this? This is called Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. And it's typically presented as a triangle. I tried for a little bit to find the image that gave you guys the most information, and this is actually not even the slide with the small text but I realize it might be a little bit difficult to see some of the things on here, so I'm gonna read this. But let me know in the chat box if you guys are familiar with this. But the way that this theory works out is that when you need something that's lower down on the hierarchy, you are physically, psychologically unable to concentrate onto work towards things that are higher up on the triangle, right, on the pyramid.



# Dream of Travel Writing

## Annual Review Part 4: Getting Clear on What You'll Accomplish Next Year

So, I say triangle because it's two dimensional and it seems weird to call it a pyramid. So, for those of you that are familiar with this, have you thought about it in the context of your travel writing? Because I often see people who are really focused on, for instance, writing, you know, these crazy personality-filled long form essays that take all sorts of time to craft properly and perhaps they haven't taken classes in it before, so they're really figuring out the structure and what to include as they go.

Now, this kind of thing is way up here...are you seeing my mouse? Yeah, great. This is way up here in the pyramid, and the reason I mention this is that a lot of the people that I see who are trying to do this and who are struggling, it's not even just that they don't have regular freelance travel writing income coming in or regular income coming in of any other type, but they also, perhaps, you know, like I mentioned, maybe they haven't taken class in this and not really used to it.

So they're having a lot of issues that come up even just a couple of rungs down here they're having these esteem issues, and they're even having belonging issues because they feel like this is something that all these other writers that are cooler than them or more experienced than them do, and they're not just part of this group.

We're gonna talk about the words like I said, and then we're gonna get into what your next year looks like. But I really want you to keep in mind that you need to work out these things that are lower down on the rung. Lower rungs on the ladder or lower steps on that pyramid or lower levels of the triangle. And so what that means is that whatever is your aim, your vision for the year ahead, part of that needs to encompass filling in these gaps.

So let's say, for instance, that you would really love to quit your job so that you have time to focus on your freelance travel writing and really "do it." But you know, you have mouths to feed, you're a mother. And so, perhaps you're a single mother so you're the only one feeding those mouths. So, for you, this physiological level is very, very important. But what if that's not the case? There are certain people that I coach who, for them, it's not that money isn't an issue so much, but their husband has an income which allows them to live comfortably and it's not really a huge issue one way or the other to the family's basic needs what income comes in through that person's freelance writing.

They do have up here in the esteem level, a desire to make sure that they're contributing to the household, but that's not affecting this basic physiological level. But then there's other people who perhaps are in two-income households and don't have kids but they do really need to be earning, and so even though they can get by without that income, they really want



# Dream of Travel Writing

## Annual Review Part 4: Getting Clear on What You'll Accomplish Next Year

that security. And so they're likely to hold on to other jobs or other things along the side because they don't think that they can get that security from freelance travel writing or they haven't in the past.

This one, you'll notice the love and belonging I commented on a little bit when I was talking about the mythical person with their essays. But this is another one. If you feel too solitary in your efforts to work on your freelance travel writing. If you have problems and you feel like you are the only person having those problems. Or I just had a call today with a person just was going on and on and on about her new clients.

She has been doing a big learning curve. She came from a totally different field into freelance traveling writing, and she's just working really hard to get to the point where she feels like she knows enough and she's really ready to get her pitches out. She sent some travel content marketing pitches. Three of the five all signed up with her right away. She just got three clients off the bat. So she's totally new to working with clients, and like the whole first half of the call she is just telling me about these crazy personalities that she's working with and she's not sure what she should do, it seems like the husband and wife who run this company are fighting they're giving her monosyllabic emails and all these things.

And for her, she's used to working. She's a teacher, and she's used to working in person with the people that she works with in getting to know them. So for her, she didn't realize until she started having these client relationships that having a sense of friendship and mutual respect and all of those things with her clients is an important part of the clients that she wants to look to work for.

So, you might not even know at the moment that some of these things are a gap in your arsenal, a gap in your preparation to succeed as a freelance writer right now, but you can think back about certain things that you've gotten hung up on, and I bet that you can identify at least one or two of the things on here. So hopefully, you guys can read the items on here. If not, I have this slide again later. I can read off to you what it says on here.

But, take a moment, and like I said, I'll go back to the pyramid in a second. Take a moment and think, by and large. Take a moment to think. If you look at where you are with your freelance travel writing and what's holding you back and the personal forces that might be combined with that or the personal things about yourself that are showing up in your travel writing, where are you falling in this pyramid?



# Dream of Travel Writing

## Annual Review Part 4: Getting Clear on What You'll Accomplish Next Year

So I'm gonna give you a minute to think about that. And as you guys are thinking, I'm just gonna read off what's in here for those of you who are having trouble reading it, and I'm gonna edit it a little bit.

So the physiological ones. This is around food and having a home and sleep and things like that, and we often think about that as, you know, just being able to have enough money to pay rent and put food on the table, but there's things here like sleep that are really important. If you're losing sleep at night because you aren't sure how you're gonna cover the bills or because of the stress of something, then you're probably in that physiological level, that yellow level at the bottom. So again, don't feel compelled to share it, where you are, in the chat box. But I want you to think about this for yourself.

So, if you're in the safety level, for you, security is the thing. So, the physiological level, like I said, is really just needing to have health, to be healthy, whereas the safety level is really more about knowing that you can plan for tomorrow, knowing that your needs and the short term are gonna be taken care of and that they will be on a recurring basis.

The belonging level, like I said, that really, in terms of what we're talking about professionally, goes into friendship, camaraderie, good relations whereas esteem, this is really about a bit of yourself, your own sense of confidence and esteem but also achievement, which is a little bit external, and respect of others and by others. And then at the top, there's self-actualization. This is when you get into greater areas of inquiry. So on the chart here it says, "Creativity, spontaneity, problem-solving." So those are the kind of things that you might be thinking about.

You might be thinking about where your career can go next. If you've been writing for a long time and you have been writing a certain type of thing or I work with some people who had really nice gigs writing for custom magazines that went under, and now are getting by, getting some content marketing kind of on short deadlines for some agencies and they wanna get control of their life again.

They're not necessarily that mid-career person who is in that self-actualization stage. They might be back down toward safety but if you are somebody who has been getting your articles published, you have relationships with editors, and now you wanna move into working on a book or perhaps looking at doing some freelance editing in a magazine or seeing what's next for you, you might be in that self-actualization level. Okay, great. So hopefully you guys have all thought about that.



# Dream of Travel Writing

## Annual Review Part 4: Getting Clear on What You'll Accomplish Next Year

So now, I wanna get into these words that I talked about. So, as I was writing this slide, I was like, “Wow, this phrase sounds really familiar. I’m sure it’s from a movie.” But my Googling didn’t really tell me which movie. I guess it’s too many movies and too many books, you just get into something too easily and people don’t put it in quote libraries because it’s so, so normal.

So, here’s the thing about these words, guys, that we’re gonna look at is that I want you to choose three words and I want them to tie back into this. Okay? So this is why we did this in this order because the words that are gonna guide you for the year ahead need to tie into what you need to bolster, what you’re lacking or struggling with right now to be able to really move your career forward.

So, as we look at these words, I’m gonna give you a big long list and a couple minutes to look at it and to come up with the three words for yourself, and I’m gonna ask you to share those. But first, I wanna give some examples. These are just pulled right under my book. These are in the exercise about doing your planning for the year ahead that’s in the “Six-Figure Travel Writing Road Map.”

So, a second reason that I’m gonna go through these is that if you’re interested in having your own plan for 2018 critique next year, these are a good example of the amounts of background and the conciseness and to the pointness of the background information about yourself that we’re gonna need for that because also we need to fit it on a slide, so I really just can’t have super long blurbs from you guys.

So, I wanna show these to you, and I’m gonna read them out loud for those of you who are mostly just listening. So these are three examples of super made up people. These aren’t people I coach. These aren’t even based on people I coach. I put these together a couple of years ago. So these are very basic made up people but I’m giving an example of what may have happened in the past and what these people wanna do for the year ahead and what their three words might be.

So, this example is Andrea or fake Andrea. Andrea had a great year last year until her biggest client took up the majority of her time, took their marketing in-house. She was left scrambling to fill the gap. She wants to re-grow her business while keeping herself from being in that situation again. So Andrea’s three words could be diversity, right? Because she wants to keep herself from having a situation if a client goes under or something like that.



# Dream of Travel Writing

## Annual Review Part 4: Getting Clear on What You'll Accomplish Next Year

Growth because she needs to restore but also she wants to grow past where she was. And protection. She wants to kind of make herself be first in a certain way that maybe she hasn't been thinking about in the past because she was focused too much on the relationship with her client. So, in the upcoming year, she'll focus on expanding her client base to a wider set of ongoing clients while increasing her income and creating client situations and contracts that give her a safety net for one relationship's end. So here, we talked about, you know, a bigger client base, that goes to diversity, growth which is increasing her income, and contracts that are gonna protect her, right, so that's our protection area.

So let's look at another one. So, Ian packed his calendar pretty full with magazine articles last year. He wants to grow his income but feels lost at times from juggling so many outlets. So, he knows he needs to cut back, but he's nervous about losing income. And I hear this a lot from people who are kind of in stage two of their freelance writing, when they've, you know, pushed past at not being able to pitch, and they got a bunch of pitches out, now, they have so much work that they don't know what to do with it but it's from so many different outlets and they're just constantly bobble heading between different clients.

So, in Ian's case, he is gonna add recurring writing work on top of his existing magazine work and slowly transition to more of a 50/50 split between one-off assignments and ongoing relationships. So his three words might be self-care, exploration, and patience because it takes a while to make that transition. So, in the year ahead, he'll work out ways to better handle his current client load while also adding the additional strain of exploring new income streams. Right? Because this is the thing is that anytime you want to make a change in your income balance, especially in the magazine world, you need a quite cognizant of the delay in income that that entails. So he's also gonna embrace patience while that extra strain is happening in the short term.

So let's look at one more. So Bethany had a few setbacks this year with personal issues, right, I mentioned, earlier in response to something going on in the chatbox that this is quite common. And so, if you're one of these people, this is a good one to look at. So, Bethany's had a few setbacks this year with personal issues keeping her from working as much as she wanted, as well as the loss of a major client that went under.

So she's rebounded and found clients to fill the gaps but she feels strained because she isn't spending as much time on her novel or with her family as she would like. So Bethany's three words might be balance, security, and revenue. She'll push herself to replace her low paying clients with high paying more stable ones to allow her to continue the income level she desires while working fewer hours.



# Dream of Travel Writing

## Annual Review Part 4: Getting Clear on What You'll Accomplish Next Year

So, this is what we're looking at putting together for you guys. And like I said, you don't need to put this whole thing in the chat box right now. For now, just share with us your three words. And so, I'm gonna look over...we're going go over to this side, and this the slide that I was saying where everything's a bit small...and let me just see if it uploaded by any chance. No, it's not uploaded. It does give me this preview option so let me just see if that'll maybe, maybe work. No. Okay.

So, what I'm gonna do is I'm gonna give you guys about two... Yeah, see, Bethany might sound like a lot of you. So, I'm gonna give you guys two or three minutes to work on picking out your three words, and these words that we're gonna do right now, it's only two or three minutes are not set in stone, but I want you to take the time to look through these words and start to identify which ones resonate with where you are now and where you want to be. And I was talking about this on a coaching call with somebody earlier today, and I said, "Don't worry if you feel like your words are reactive because that is great."

Right? I talked about...it sounds horrible, right? But I talked about how motivation works and it tends to be about minimizing past pain or creating future pleasure or optimizing current well-being. So those are the things that your words should be around, and if you're not sure what for you, well, optimized current well-being, minimized past pain, create future pleasure, that Maslow's Hierarchy is the place to go.

I'm gonna go back for a second to that Maslow's Hierarchy slide. So, you got the words to look through on the side of your chat box, and you've got the Maslow's Hierarchy at the left, and I'm gonna give you a couple minutes. I'll be here for questions, of course, and start to come up with three words for yourself and share those with us in the chatbox.

Thanks, guys, for sending these in. I'm gonna give you another minute but just in the background while you guys are working on those I wanted to point out that I'm seeing a couple in here that I really love in terms of words that... So, I pulled these words from a deck of cards actually about personal values that's from a leadership training program, and unfortunately, my husband lost the cards so I had to go online and find them.

So, I edited a little bit the list that I put. I didn't put some that I think wouldn't quite be appropriate for this group or for what we're talking about. But there's some that people chose that I wasn't quite sure about putting but I think they're really important. And so, I just wanted to highlight there might be some words... And I'm gonna go back to that slide now so we can all see it together, I hope we kind of see it.



# Dream of Travel Writing

## Annual Review Part 4: Getting Clear on What You'll Accomplish Next Year

There's some words in here that might feel a little nervous about choosing or about saying in the group if you did choose them. And some of those might be one's like realism or genuineness or honesty or cooperation, these ones that have a sense of connoting that there's something that you're doing that's a lack of this virtuous thing at the current time, but I often find that in our freelance writing businesses, we can get into situations where whether it's a client that we started working for a long time ago and we're still working for or somebody that we just picked up to fill the gap and we're still working for that we've kinda lost a bit of sense of self in some of our client relationships.

So if you feel like there's something that you think of, whether it's openness or hope or helpfulness, that you think of as a trait about yourself but that's become lacking from your business, those are great words to choose as well. Duty, if you feel like...I often say, "I'm super, super lazy," and that's something that I struggle with a lot. So that's the kind of thing that I could choose as well.

Great, great. So, I'm seeing this from a lot of you. So, if you're still working on it, you can go ahead and keep working on it at the background. I'm just gonna move on to the next **bip** to make sure that we can get through everything.

So, again, thank you, guys, that chose to share with us, so much for sharing. Yes, Ingrid, I absolutely am so proud of where you are right now, I was just cooing about you to Michelle earlier on our coaching call. So, thank you, guys, so much for sharing those and I want you to keep those words. I mean, a lot of people who do three words for their year ahead is that they put them, you know, on their writing space in front of them so they can be reminded of them regularly.

I often keep them like on an online notes file where I'm making my to-do list for the day. But the ideas that these three words should be the decision-making matrix, so to say, for you for the year ahead. So, if an opportunity comes in from a client, does it fit these three words? There's no need to say, "Does it fit my goal that I need to earn \$5,000 this month?" Or, you know, "Does it fit my goal that I need to be working with more national magazines rather than regional magazine?" Because those kind of things, like I said back to that relevance part of the SMART goals, how does that really necessarily tie into what you want your life to look like, right?

So these three words can allow you to evaluate things that you might be putting yourself out there for, as in pitching different things, as well as things that might come to you. It might help you evaluate conferences that you're thinking of attending or even just networking





# Dream of Travel Writing

## Annual Review Part 4: Getting Clear on What You'll Accomplish Next Year

events that you're thinking of attending or blogs that you're spending time reading? Is that reading really helping you further your goals?

Stephanie has a great idea in here. She says she has a huge ball jar and she puts her words in there, and every time she does something that matches that, she puts it in a jar and reads it on the days that she feels down. That's a very cool idea to help with...especially those of you who are looking at esteem-oriented ones. That's a great idea that Stephanie just had.

Okay. Now, we're gonna do couple more than three words. So now I want you to tell us a story, your story, but not your story right now, not your story of what may have held you back in the past year or even where you are right now. I want you to tell us a fictional story. Don't worry about that achievability of the story. This is a story like a bedtime story that you would tell a child, a small child that you don't tell scary stories to.

This is a bedtime story about a beautiful freelance prince or princess in a far land who's achieving amazing things. So, let's all time travel forward to December 14th, 2018 and I wanna hear your story of 2018. In this mythical future where everything is beautiful and everything is possible. You can tell it in first person, you can tell it in third person omniscient like a fairy tale, however you want. But take a minute, think of your story. If you're able to think quickly and type it up and share with us here, that's great.

I'd super love to see a couple of them. But this is really like fairy tale bedtime story that I wanna hear. This is really the most beautiful picture of you telling the quest of 2018 to your children or your grandchildren, okay? So, pop it here in the chatbox if you're able to get it written up. I'm gonna give you a couple minutes. Here's some guidelines on the screen.

You can talk about what you accomplished, like what challenges you faced and what you did to overcome them, you can talk about what went well, you can talk about, you know, this great place that you're in now. That's the kind of thing that we're looking for. So, some general guidelines here but you don't wanna make it too specific, I don't wanna give you a format for this. I want you to really use your imagination on this one. So, I'll give you couple of minutes for that.

Okay, awesome. We got some really great ones here in the chatbox. So, if you're still working on yours and you get it ready, please go ahead and share it with others if you feel comfortable. Otherwise, we've got some really nice ones to the look at a range of experiences in here. Stephanie has a nice one around...I would call it around the intersection



# Dream of Travel Writing

## Annual Review Part 4: Getting Clear on What You'll Accomplish Next Year

of travel and publication. And Ingrid's got a great one around security and getting yourself set up to make the leap into full time freelancing. And Jade has been writing for a bit and she's got a great one around taking things to the next level.

Oh, great, you got some more coming in as well. Adrian starts with, "Once upon a time in a land far, far away." I love it. I love it. Oh, and it's great because Sylvia continues, I have all the work I can handle from editors and contact clients who absolutely adore my attention to detail, creative ideas, and reliability. I'm in demand but stay humble. This is great because this it seems vague but it absolutely gives us a benchmark of things to work towards. And so, I'm gonna start to talk a little bit about that. And like I said, if you're still working on yours and you're feeling comfortable about sharing it, please feel free to drop that in the chatbox, okay?

So, we've got our words, we've got our story, we're supposed to be talking about how to make plans for next year, right? How do we do that? So, this story that I was talking about, I know I mentioned that it's kind of a fairy tale, and Adrian's very much took that tone, but the thing is that within that fairy tale, within that daydream there are concrete things that we can pull out and that we can make steps to achieve, steps that are absolutely followable and doable and spaced out in a fashion in which they will happen even if other things get in the way.

And this is the part of making your plan, rather than goals, but your plan for the year. I care way more about planning for the year than I do about goals. Putting things on the calendar with all the tiny steps that lead up to them, mapped out so that you have oodles of space to get it done. I spent a lot of years doing different types of events that I've written for magazines. And the thing is that no matter how ludicrous some things sounds, if you start working on it in advance and you move through the steps, you can get it done.

And it's funny because Tim Ferriss' four hour work week became really famous, I think, just for its title, just for this concept of only working four hours a week that the whole front section of the book is all about this, it's all about how if you wanna be a competitive professional tango dancer in Argentina, you can make that happen in just 18 months if you just set the right path to get there.

So, and this is something that we talked about a lot, you know, and in the book, in "The Six-Figure Travel Writing Road Map," I do map out, "This is what you do to go from point A to point B," but we all have different initial circumstances and different places that we wanna reach. And those are guided by your motivation, right?



# Dream of Travel Writing

## Annual Review Part 4: Getting Clear on What You'll Accomplish Next Year

It's guided by, like I said, what is going to actually make you do things. So these words are gonna help you figure out what are the right specific projects or accomplishments for you. What do you really wanna be working towards so that we can make those decisions to ignore everything else as much as possible?

So, the next steps are, and these are things that we're not gonna do together but that you can do after the call, is to pull out specific projects or accomplishments from your narrative, and put them in a list. So, let me just scroll back down. There's two that I had picked out to use for this. So, Ingrid's is super easy, right? Ingrid said she wants to have five travel content marketing clients, she wants to be comfortable on the phone pitching, and she is getting published in a handful of travel trade magazines. Those are super, super clear goals.

But let's look at one that's a little bit more obtuse. Right? Let's look at Adrian's. So Adrian says she has all the work she can handle from editors and content clients. So what that means is she needs to know how many hours that she wants to work in a week, she needs to know how much she needs to earn per hour to hit her income goals, she needs to then say, "Okay, if I have this many hours, and I'm gonna do this much work with editors and this much work for content clients, that means I need to have this much in terms of assignments."

And then that's the target that she can go out and work towards in the vane of these things that she's talked about: Her attention to details, creative ideas, and reliability, so she's going to be specifically playing up those things. She's gonna be pitching stories that involve and that center on her attention to detail. She's gonna either do some courses to get herself really coming up with a lot of ideas if she's not already an idea machine and she's going to figure out what, in her life, her personal, her non-work life she needs to address to make sure that she can be consistently reliable with all of her clients.

Okay, so these are the types of projects or accomplishments that you can pull out of your narrative, whatever your narrative is. Okay, and you wanna compare this to your words and make sure that they jive, okay? If there's things in your daydream, in your fairy tale that don't line up with your words, which one feels more right to you? And then the last question, and we do this only at the end, is what number, what's your big five-figure or six-figure number of what you want your income from your travel writing for the whole year to be?

So thank you, guys, so much for being with me today. It's getting dark here. I know a lot of you guys are on the west coast and probably don't have that problem, but for those of you that are on the east coast or elsewhere, have a great evening and a great weekend, and I look forward to chatting with you, guys, again next week for our call-in webinar. Thanks, guys.